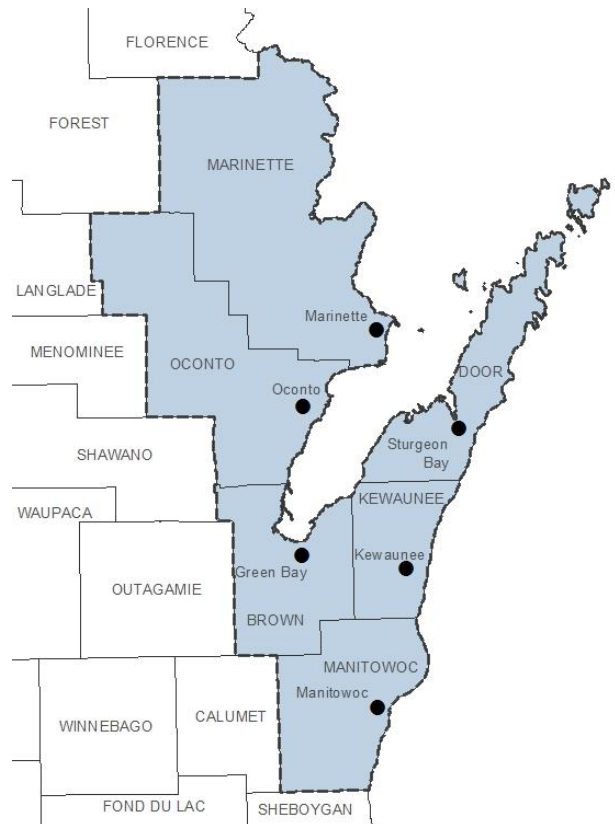


Recreation Opportunities Analysis



UPPER LAKE MICHIGAN COASTAL REGION



2. UPPER LAKE MICHIGAN COASTAL REGION

BACKGROUND

LANDSCAPE SETTING

The Upper Lake Michigan Coastal Region is in the northeast part of the state and encompasses Brown, Door, Kewaunee, Manitowoc, Marinette and Oconto counties. The region is heavily influenced by its association with Lake Michigan, with each of the region's six counties containing some portion of the lake's shoreline. Although many residents and visitors to the region use Lake Michigan for their recreational pursuits, other water resources such as the Menominee, Peshtigo and Pike Rivers also attract recreationists with their abundant fishing and paddling opportunities. Many large rivers, notably the Menominee, Peshtigo and Oconto play a critical role in maintaining the fishery of the Bay. This area also supports an exceptional concentration of high quality rivers and streams, most of which harbor outstanding trout fisheries.

In the northern portion of the region, the landscape is characterized by glaciated topography with sandy, well-drained soils as well as steep outcropping bedrock knolls. Around Green Bay there are large coastal marshes and embayments, conifer swamps, and the Niagara Escarpment. The topography south of Green Bay is a combination of gently rolling hills interspersed with large flat wetlands. East of the Escarpment, the land gradually slopes towards Lake Michigan.

LOCAL ECONOMY

Recreation and tourism play large roles in the local economy. Of particular note, Door County contains over 250 miles of picturesque shoreline—more than any other county in the United States—and 10 historic lighthouses, features that attract many tourists and seasonal residents. The collection of state and local parks here is a testament to the scenic value. Peninsula State Park, located along the beautiful shores of Green Bay, is one of the most popular state parks in Wisconsin with over 1.2 million visitors each year.

The major land use in the northern part of the region is forest commodity production, primarily for pulp. Very little agriculture occurs there with most of the crop acres in hay. Looking southward, some agriculture is present, although fewer acres of less productive land is no longer farmed. Much of this land is rapidly converting to suburban development. In the southern reaches of the region, agriculture is the most prevalent land use, particularly dairy farming.

Urban resources also affect the Upper Lake Michigan Coastal Region. Green Bay, the region's urban center, influences much of its surrounding area with its suburban growth and cultural resources. Growing health care and manufacturing industries play significant roles in the regional economy.

RECREATION USES AND PARTICIPATION

Lake Michigan, its shoreline and tributaries are the foundation of much of the recreation in this part of the state. Given the tremendous views that large waterbodies provide, the shoreline along Lake Michigan and Green Bay is exceedingly popular for many different types of active and passive recreation. The lake and the bay are very popular for boating, fishing and sailing in the summer. Snowmobiling, cross-country skiing and ice fishing draw visitors in the winter.

The Menominee, Peshtigo, and Pike Rivers are very popular for paddling and fishing, drawing thousands of visitors each year. The Roaring Rapids section of the Peshtigo is regarded to be the finest whitewater canoeing and kayaking water in the Midwest. Fishing on the many high-quality trout streams that feed into the major rivers is very popular. Numerous waterfalls and rapids occur throughout the northern part the region and are part of the aesthetic draw of the area.

With over 500,000 acres of county, state and national forests in this region, there is ample opportunity for a variety of recreation pursuits. Hunting (particularly for grouse and deer), fishing, bird watching and hiking are popular activities here. State-owned lands along the west shore of Green Bay provide popular hunting opportunities, however, their significant amounts of wetlands limit the variety of recreation activities that can be accommodated.

Activities that residents of the Upper Lake Michigan Coastal Region participate in at higher rates than the state average:

- Hunting – migratory birds
- Hunting – small game
- Hunting – turkey
- Trapping

Recreation participation rates for Wisconsin residents statewide are presented on page 14 of the Introduction. Participation rates of Upper Lake Michigan Coastal Region residents are consistent with the state average or within a few percentage points in variation. Notable differences to the state average are shown in the box to the right.

EXISTING RECREATION SUPPLY IN THE UPPER LAKE MICHIGAN COASTAL REGION

PUBLIC LANDS FOR OUTDOOR RECREATION

The Upper Lake Michigan Coastal Region has approximately 596,000 acres of public land available for outdoor recreation. Along with the opportunities available in and around Lake Michigan, the large public land blocks to the north provide ample space to accommodate a wide variety of activities. This section briefly describes the public conservation and recreation lands in the Upper Lake Michigan Coastal Region. A description of all public lands in Wisconsin is provided in Appendix 3.

a) Federal

The National Forest Service owns and manages just over 140,000 acres in the Upper Lake Michigan Coastal Region as part of the Chequamegon-Nicolet National Forest (CNNF). The CNNF is managed for multiple uses including forest production, wildlife habitat, outdoor recreation, water quality and fisheries habitat and wilderness areas. The US Fish & Wildlife Service manages some small properties in the region.

b) State

The Department of Natural Resources owns 110,000 acres and holds public access easements on 19,000 acres in the Upper Lake Michigan Coastal Region. State properties in the region span the range of intended recreational settings and development levels (Map B3). At one end of the spectrum are properties such as Peninsula State Park that include intensive recreation settings with developed campgrounds, miles of trails, a nature center and picnic sites. Peninsula, along with the other state parks, draw over 2 million visitors each year. In addition, properties like Peshtigo River State Forest and Menomonie River State Recreation Area provide a variety of remote wilderness opportunities.

At the other end of the spectrum are properties like Bailey's Harbor State Natural Area, lands specifically acquired to protect high-quality native plant communities and rare species. Although these types of properties can provide some limited recreation opportunities for low-impact activities such as hunting, bird watching and nature study, their primary purpose is not necessarily to provide recreation opportunities requiring development or infrastructure.

The State Board of Commissioners of Public Land owns about 3,500 acres in the region. These lands are scattered throughout the region in tracts typically several hundred acres or smaller in size. The BCPL manages its lands primarily for forest products. Many of the BCPL lands are isolated or contain wetlands and generally have limited recreation potential.

c) County

Two of the counties in the region (Marinette and Oconto) have enrolled a total of 273,000 acres as part of the County Forest program. These lands provide a variety of benefits including forest products, fisheries and wildlife habitat, many types of outdoor recreation, and water quality protection. The Marinette County Forest is the second-largest in the state at almost 230,000 acres and is used by local residents and visitors from outside the region for a variety of trail activities, hunting and fishing, and other recreation pursuits. Most of these counties manage parks that provide campgrounds, boat launches and other types of infrastructure to support recreation.

d) Other

Many cities, villages and towns in the Upper Lake Michigan Coastal Region own and manage parks, boat access sites, and other properties that provide opportunities for outdoor recreation. Given their easy proximity to many citizens, although these properties tend to be small they are typically well used. Most public accesses to Lake Michigan are at capacity during peak fishing periods on the weekends. In addition, several school forests in the region are open to some forms of recreation, generally when they are not in use by school and community groups.

PRIVATE LANDS OPEN TO THE PUBLIC FOR OUTDOOR RECREATION

This section summarizes the privately-owned lands in the region that are open to the public for some types of recreation. A detailed description of private lands in Wisconsin open to the public is provided in Appendix 3.

a) Forest Legacy program easements

Approximately 14,500 acres in Marinette County are part of the Forest Legacy program, which is designed to identify and protect environmentally important private forestlands threatened with conversion to non-forest uses (such as subdivision for residential or commercial development). To help maintain the integrity and traditional uses of private forestlands, the Forest Legacy Program promotes the use of conservation easements.

b) Managed Forest Law (MFL) and Forest Crop Law enrolled lands

The amount of land enrolled in these forestry programs is mostly in Marinette County with the remaining acreage spread across the rest of the counties in the Upper Lake Michigan Coastal Region. Approximately 40,000 acres in the region are currently enrolled in these programs. Because these programs use 25 or 50-year contracts, the total amount enrolled changes from year to year as landowners enroll lands into the program (only the MFL program is open to enrollment) and contracts covering other lands expire.

c) Land trusts

These land trusts operate in the Upper Lake Michigan Coastal Region: Door County Land Trust, The Ridges Sanctuary, Inc., Glacial Lakes Conservancy, Baird Creek Preservation Foundation, Northeast Wisconsin Land Trust, and The Conservation Fund. These non-profit conservation organizations have protected over 6,400 acres in the region. Most of these lands are open to the public for some forms of recreation such as hunting, fishing, hiking, wildlife watching, snowshoeing and other similar activities.

d) Voluntary Public Access Program

The DNR Voluntary Public Access and Habitat Incentive Program provides financial incentives to private landowners who open their property to public hunting, fishing, trapping and wildlife observation. Funding was authorized in the 2008 and 2014 Farm Bills. 2014 funds are administered and provided by U.S. Department of Agriculture NRCS. To date, there are over 1,400 acres available in the Upper Lake Michigan Coastal Region.

e) Snowmobile Trails on Private Lands

The state snowmobile trail network has been developed through the work of local clubs partnering with private landowners. Agreements with willing landowners allow trails to be located for the winter season, which enables snowmobilers to travel throughout the network. There are 2,132 miles of snowmobile trail in the Upper Lake Michigan Coastal region, of which 82% (1,745 miles) on are private lands.

EXISTING PUBLIC RECREATION INFRASTRUCTURE

The department contacted representatives from county governments and regional organizations to gather information about the recreation opportunities available to the public across the Upper Lake Michigan Coastal Region. In addition, department staff searched websites for additional data and descriptions of the recreation opportunities provided. Maps C and D show existing recreation infrastructure in the six counties of the region.

The Upper Lake Michigan Coastal Region contains many large public land holdings, notably the Chequamegon-Nicolet National Forest and the two County Forests. These properties provide a wide range of high-quality recreation opportunities. What follows are examples of infrastructure in the Upper Lake Michigan Coastal Region that support a variety of recreation activities.

a) Peninsula State Park:

- 20+ off-road and mountain biking trails
- 16+ miles groomed cross-country skiing trails
- Hiking and nature trails
- 5 campgrounds, 470 campsites
- Picnic/day use areas
- Swimming beach and boat access site
- Hunting, fishing and trapping opportunities
- Nature study, photography, wildlife watching, scenic viewing opportunities

b) Potawatomi State Park

- Off-road bicycle trails
- Groomed cross-country skiing trails
- Hiking and nature trails and observation tower
- Family and group camping opportunities and picnic areas
- Access site on Green Bay for boating, canoeing, kayaking, fishing, SCUBA diving and water skiing
- Hunting, fishing and trapping opportunities
- Nature study, photography, wildlife watching, scenic viewing opportunities

c) Governor Thompson State Park – Peshtigo River State Forest

- Water access, remote and family campgrounds
- Boating and canoe/kayak opportunities
- Swimming beaches
- 20+ miles snowmobile trails
- Hiking, cross country skiing and snowshoeing
- Hunting, fishing and trapping opportunities
- Nature study, photography, wildlife watching opportunities

d) Point Beach State Forest

- Indoor group camp and family campground
- Swimming beaches
- Paved bike trail
- Hiking, cross country skiing, and snowshoeing
- Nature center and reservable shelters
- Hunting, fishing and trapping opportunities
- Nature study, photography, wildlife watching opportunities

e) State Wildlife and Fishery Areas

- Hunting, fishing and trapping opportunities
- Hiking, nature study, photography, wildlife watching opportunities

f) Chequamegon-Nicolet National Forest

- Horse and cross-country ski trails
- Bike trail loops
- ATV and snowmobile trails
- Hiking and hunter walking trails
- Hunting, fishing, and trapping opportunities
- Nature study, photography, wildlife watching opportunities

g) Marinette County Forest

- 200+ miles of ATV/UTV and snowmobile trails
- 20+ miles of cross-country ski trails
- Hiking and hunter walking trails
- 230,000+ acres for hunting, trapping, nature study, photography, wildlife watching opportunities
- Several waterway access points for boating, canoeing and kayaking

PUBLIC INPUT ON RECREATION NEEDS IN THE UPPER LAKE MICHIGAN COASTAL REGION

INPUT GATHERED AS PART OF THE ROA

The department hosted two public open house meetings, in Sturgeon Bay and Crivitz, on August 22 and 23, 2017, respectively. These open houses were designed to both present information about the ROA and to gather public input on the types of recreation activities they pursued, what places they liked to visit (including what attributes drew them to these properties), and what additional opportunities they wished were available in the Upper Lake Michigan Coastal Region.

In addition to these open houses, the department posted an online public input form to its web page. A downloadable version was also available for people who preferred to print, fill out and send in the form. The public input period ran from August 3 to September 8, 2017. The department sent out information and press releases about the ROA project and encouraged people to share their perspectives through the online or hardcopy public input forms. Recreation groups, non-profit organizations, and others distributed links to the input form to their members.¹

The department received comments in the following formats:

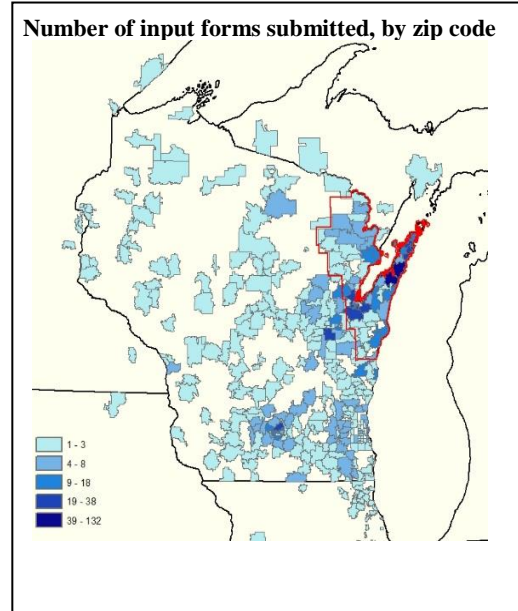
- 1,469 online public input forms
- 88 paper copies of the public input form
- 14 letters and emails

It is important for readers to keep in mind that the public input received through the ROA process is simply information gathered at one point in time, using an open-access technique. It is not a representation of what the “average” resident believes or the range of perspectives that exist.

¹ The public input form was available for anyone to complete and about 1,500 people did so. The department's experience is that when it provides “open access” opportunities in which anyone can participate, the people that respond tend to be those that find out about the input opportunity and to have a particular or active, interest in a specific issue; that is, they care enough about an issue to take the time to find and fill out the form or write an email or letter. The responses received are valuable in providing the department with an understanding of people's perspectives, reasoning and breadth of viewpoints. However, because there is no “defined population” from which these responses originate, from a statistical perspective there is no way to know how the respondents compare to a larger population (for example, how the 1,500 respondents compare to the population of the six-county region or the state as a whole) and therefore no way the results can be generalized with an associated error margin to a larger population.

Respondents were asked to list the zip code of their primary residence. Of those who provided this information, the map at right shows their distribution and frequency. As can be seen, the primary residence of many people who provided input is within the six-county Upper Lake Michigan Coastal Region. As can also be seen, many respondents live outside the region (53% of respondents). Undoubtedly, this reflects the large number of seasonal homes and the extent to which the region is a destination for vacationers. It also likely reflects the efforts of groups and organizations encouraging their members throughout the state and Midwest to complete the input form.

As is clear from the number and variety of the comments received, the Upper Lake Michigan Coastal Region plays an important role in the state's outdoor recreation system. The region, particularly the Door Peninsula, has drawn vacationers since the state's earliest days and has been a family destination for generations. The department received comments, perspectives and ideas on the following topics.



Participation in outdoor recreation

Respondents to the public input opportunity participate in many outdoor recreation activities. Popular activities that were selected by respondents are seen in the table at right. We can compare these results to the participation results from the recent Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP) survey. The **bolded** activities in the table at right were the most popular activities that the SCORP survey indicated residents in the Upper Lake Michigan Coastal Region participate in. As can be seen, the activities that respondents to the ROA input form participate in vary from the results of the random sample of Upper Lake Michigan Coastal Region residents generated by the SCORP survey.

Popular recreation activities in which respondents to the ROA input form participate

Bicycling – paved trails

Bicycling – mountain biking, single track

Camping – tent

Camping – RV/pop-up

Canoeing/kayaking

Cross-country skiing/ snowshoeing

Fishing – from a boat, canoe or kayak

Hiking, walking, running on trails

Horseback riding

Swimming

Wildlife/bird watching

Properties that people visit

Almost 20% of the Upper Lake Michigan Coastal Region is in public ownership. Some of the state parks in the region are among the most visited state-owned properties in Wisconsin. Indeed, almost two-thirds of the people who provided input had visited at least one of the state parks and almost 10% had visited all five parks in the last three years. Of the people that submitted information through the public input opportunity, almost half had walked the Ice Age Trail and 40% had visited the Chequamegon-Nicolet National Forest in the last three years. Other popular properties include the state trails (Ahnapee, Nicolet, Fox River, Mountain Bay, and Devils River), the state forests (Point Beach and Peshtigo), and the county forests (Marinette and Oconto).

Factors important in determining favorite places to visit

Of the people providing input, the majority (69%) selected (1) the quality of trails as one of the top four most important factors in determining their favorite property to visit. This is expected, given that many respondents noted their participation in a variety of motorized and non-motorized trail activities. In decreasing order, the next three most important factors are: (2) the desire to be in a quiet place, (3) good maps, signs or information about the property, and (4) the quality of the habitat.

Additional outdoor recreation opportunities needed

Nearly ninety percent of respondents believe that more recreational opportunities are needed in the Upper Lake Michigan Coastal Region. Of the additional opportunities desired by respondents, the top four choices selected were trail-related. Again, this speaks to the respondent's participation in a variety of trail activities. The opportunity that was most frequently selected as needed in the Upper Lake Michigan Coastal Region was more trails for hiking, walking or running, which was selected by more than one-third of respondents.

The recent SCORP survey of statewide residents found a correlation between the activities that people pursue and their perspectives on what additional opportunities are needed in their home county. For many activities, participants generally believed there was a need for more opportunities. The public input received as part of the ROA showed a similar pattern in the Upper Lake Michigan Coastal Region. For example, a strong majority (80%) of people who ride horses believe there is a need for more equestrian trails in the Upper Lake Michigan Coastal Region. Similarly, about two-thirds of mountain bikers and fat-tire bike riders think there is a need for more natural surface trails in the region. More shore access to lakes and streams and more rustic camping opportunities were widely supported across recreation pursuits. The largest need cited by people was for more hiking/walking/running trails.

Top 10 most frequently identified recreation opportunities needed in the Upper Lake Michigan Coastal Region, based on public input gathered during the ROA process

Activity	# of responses
More hiking/walking/running trails	416
More horseback trails	378
More paved bicycling trails	363
More natural surface (dirt) bicycling trails	346
More rustic/quiet campgrounds (pit toilets, no electricity or generators)	286
More public shore access to lakes & streams	226
More trails for motorized recreation (ATVs, UTVs, off-road motorcycles, etc.)	220
More developed campgrounds (electric hook-ups, flush toilets, showers)	185
More wildlife watching decks or platforms	130
More local parks and playgrounds	98

For respondents who participate in big game hunting in the Upper Lake Michigan Coastal Region, slightly more believe that more lands open to public hunting are needed, rather than larger populations of big game species (e.g., deer and bear). For hunters as a group, their top selection for future needs was more trails for motorized recreation.

Department-managed roads and motorized access

Nearly 170 miles of department roads exist on department properties in the Upper Lake Michigan Coastal Region, most of which are active or former logging roads. Generally, these roads are used primarily for management purposes, including primitive seasonal logging roads, natural resource management or other property service activities. About one-third (65 miles) of these roads are open to the public to drive "street-legal vehicles" (this includes cars, pick-up trucks, SUVs, motorcycles, and other licensed vehicles). By state law, these roads are also open to horses, horse-drawn vehicles and bicycles. Some local units of government in Marinette and Oconto counties have authorized some types of motorized recreational vehicles on designated local roads.

The department sought public feedback on potentially opening none, some, or all department roads that are currently open to "street-legal" vehicles in the Upper Lake Michigan Coastal Region to motorized recreation vehicles.² About 40% of people that provided responses believed that all DNR roads should remain closed to motorized recreational vehicles. Of the 60% that supported allowing motorized recreational vehicles on DNR roads, most thought that this access should be on a subset of roads that connect larger regional motorized recreation networks. In addition, 30% of these respondents supporting opening roads thought opening should occur to provide access during the fall hunting season (Sept 1 to Dec 31). There were notable differences in responses based on area of residence in the

² For purposes of the ROA, "recreational vehicles" includes off highway vehicles, ATVs, UTVs and off highway motorcycles.

region. For people who provided input that live in Door County, about four times as many people thought that all DNR roads should be closed to motorized recreation vehicles as thought all roads should be open. For residents in Marinette and Oconto counties, about twice as many people who provided responses believed that all DNR roads should be open to motorized recreation vehicles than thought these roads should be closed.

INPUT GATHERED AS PART OF THE WISCONSIN SCORP.

In 2016 as part of the development of the SCORP, the department asked a random sample of Wisconsin residents to identify additional outdoor recreation opportunities needed in their home county. The most frequently identified needs statewide were:

- hiking/walking/running trails
- bicycling trails
- public shore access to lakes, rivers and streams
- public shooting ranges
- local parks and playgrounds

Respondents living in the six counties in the Upper Lake Michigan Coastal Region identified the following activity at a higher rate than the state average:

- public shore access to lakes, rivers and streams

Upper Lake Michigan Coastal Region residents identified four activities less frequently than the state average:

- bicycling trails
- ball fields
- outdoor courts for tennis, handball and basketball
- local parks and playgrounds.

FUTURE RECREATION NEEDS IN THE UPPER LAKE MICHIGAN COASTAL REGION

The Upper Lake Michigan Coastal Region has many existing opportunities for outdoor recreation found at state parks and trails. The region, particularly Door County, draws millions of visitors each year. Visitors are drawn to campgrounds because of the scenery and the water-related activities available nearby. Lake Michigan and Green Bay play a significant role in the region's tourism economy. Future and current partnerships between public land managers and non-profit recreation groups has great potential to offer more areas for developed recreation. The wilderness areas to the north have the potential to support all sorts of recreation opportunities for activities that depend on large blocks of public land. Even with the existing supply of opportunities available in the region, the public identified several future recreational needs. The public also expressed strong support to leverage existing opportunities to provide better and more recreational experiences for residents and visitors.

The department used the following sources to identify which recreation opportunities are most needed in the region:

- Public input on recreation needs submitted during the comment period (August 3 to September 8, 2017).
- Data on recreation participation and needs gathered in a 2016 survey as part of the development of the 2017-2022 SCORP.
- Data gathered in previous SCORP planning efforts.

From this information, department staff grouped the relative needs for recreation activities as high, medium or low. The groupings are as follows:

Future recreation needs in the Upper Lake Michigan Coastal Region – High	Future recreation needs in the Upper Lake Michigan Coastal Region - Medium	Future recreation needs in the Upper Lake Michigan Coastal Region - Low
Bicycling - bicycle touring/road riding Bicycling - mountain biking/off-road biking Bird or wildlife watching Camping - developed Camping - primitive Canoeing or kayaking Fishing - lake fishing from a boat, canoe or kayak Fishing - lake fishing from shore or a pier Fishing - river fishing from a boat, canoe or kayak Fishing - stream or river fishing from shore or wading Hiking, walking, trail running or backpacking Horseback riding Motorboating (waterski/tubing, personal watercraft) Visiting a beach, beach walking	ATV/UTV riding Cross country skiing Dog walking Four-wheel vehicle driving Hunting - big game Hunting - small game Hunting - turkey Nature photography Off-highway motorcycle riding Participating in nature-based education programs Picnicking Sailing, windsurfing, rowing, stand-up paddling Snowmobiling Swimming in lakes and rivers Target shooting - archery Target shooting - firearms	Bicycling - fat tire/snow biking Dog sledding/skijoring Dog training Dog trialing Fishing - ice fishing Gather mushrooms, berries, etc. Geocaching Horse cart driving Hunting - migratory birds Rock climbing Scuba diving/snorkeling Snowshoeing Trapping Whitewater rafting

OPPORTUNITIES TO MEET FUTURE RECREATION NEEDS IN THE UPPER LAKE MICHIGAN COASTAL REGION ON DEPARTMENT-MANAGED LANDS

On behalf of Wisconsin residents, the department owns and manages properties in the Upper Lake Michigan Coastal Region to meet a variety of ecological and recreation goals. These properties provide a range of settings and experiences – from developed sites with flush toilets and hot showers to remote places that provide wilderness settings. At some properties in the region, a wealth of recreation opportunities is currently provided; at other properties, recreation plays a secondary role in their purpose.

Applying the regional needs listed above, the department evaluated the properties it manages in the Upper Lake Michigan Coastal Region to identify places where it could potentially incorporate some activities or enhance existing opportunities to meet these needs. The identification of department-managed lands that appear to be “good fits” to provide different activities will be used to help focus the department’s work developing and updating property master plans. A description of opportunities to meet recreation needs in the Upper Lake Michigan Coastal Region (on department-managed lands) follows.

NON-MOTORIZED TRAIL RECREATION

Non-motorized trail recreation has been and continues to be a primary outdoor activity throughout the year in the Upper Lake Michigan Coastal Region. From hiking and biking in the summer to cross-country skiing in the winter, the region's residents and visitors take advantage of the numerous opportunities that currently exist.

Participation in mountain biking has grown recently in the region and demand exists for trails suitable for a variety of skill levels. As opposed to recreational bicycle touring, where there are benefits to creating multiple connecting linkages, meeting the growing need for mountain biking and off-road biking opportunities can be created or expanded at multiple, stand-alone sites throughout the region. Mountain biking trails are constructed, narrow trails less than two feet wide.

Hiking, walking, and running on trails in the region remain very popular activities. Many opportunities currently exist on department properties throughout the region. Additional trails near population centers are likely to be most frequently used. Linking cities and villages to each other and to state and local parks will continue to create new experiences and increase economic activity in the area.

Horseback riding is in demand in the region and opportunities potentially exist to develop trails on department properties that link to other riding opportunities on adjacent lands.

Cooperatively Managed Trails

It should be noted that the department owns several state trails in the region. However, these trails are cooperatively managed by local governments, usually counties. In these partnerships, the department typically holds the land ownership while the partners develop, maintain and operate the trail. Also, the managing partner conducts planning processes to determine which recreational uses will be allowed on the property. Since use decisions are planned by the trail partners, cooperatively managed trails will not be listed below as potential "good fits" in this analysis. However, the information collected will be provided to the partners for their use in future planning efforts. For the Upper Lake Michigan Coastal Region, cooperatively managed trails include:

- Oconto River State Trail
- Ahnapee State Trail
- Devil's River State Trail
- Fox River State Trail

The following table lists current and potential future opportunities for non-motorized trail activities

Recreation Activity	Activity currently exists at the property; there are opportunities to expand this use	Activity currently exists at the property; there are only limited opportunities to expand this use	Activity currently does not exist at the property; there are opportunities to add this use	Activity currently does not exist at the property; there are only limited opportunities to add this use
Bicycling - bicycle touring/ road riding	Peninsula State Park Peshtigo River State Forest	Copper Culture Mounds State Park Governor Thompson State Park Point Beach State Forest Whitefish Dunes State Park Potawatomi State Park Newport State Park	Green Bay West Shores Wildlife Area Menominee River State Park and Recreation Area	Dunbar Barrens Kiel Marsh Wildlife Area Rock Island State Park

Recreation Activity	Activity currently exists at the property; there are opportunities to expand this use	Activity currently exists at the property; there are only limited opportunities to expand this use	Activity currently does not exist at the property; there are opportunities to add this use	Activity currently does not exist at the property; there are only limited opportunities to add this use
Bicycling - mountain biking/off-road biking	Peshigo River State Forest Point Beach State Forest	Green Bay West Shores Wildlife Area Copper Culture Mounds State Park Governor Thompson State Park Peninsula State Park Point Beach State Forest Potawatomi State Park Newport State Park Whitefish Dunes State Park	Dunbar Barrens Menominee River State Park and Recreation Area	Amberg Wildlife Area Lake Noquebay Wildlife Area Town Corner Wildlife Area Rock Island State Park
Horseback riding	Point Beach State Forest Peshigo River State Forest	Two Creeks State Park Fischer Creek Recreation Area	Menominee River State Park and Recreation Area	Dunbar Barrens Amberg Wildlife Area Green Bay West Shores Wildlife Area Town Corner Wildlife Area Whitefish Dunes State Park Peninsula State Park Potawatomi State Park Governor Thompson State Park
Hiking, walking, trail running, backpacking	All department properties are open to hiking, although most fishery, wildlife and natural areas do not have designated trails. Designated trails are found on state park, trail, forest, and flowage properties. Nearly all department properties have opportunities to add at least some designated hiking/ running/backpacking trails.			

OTHER FORMS OF RECREATION

In addition to trail-based activities, there is considerable demand for many other types of outdoor recreation in the Upper Lake Michigan Coastal Region, including camping, fishing and a variety of types of boating.

Camping was one of the area's early draws and remains one of the region's most popular activities due to the state parks in Door County and the wilderness opportunities. Camping has evolved over the years and there has been a shift in demand both for more developed and rustic experiences. The department currently provides a range of camping opportunities from primitive, isolated sites with only a fire ring and box latrine to densely grouped campgrounds with flush toilets and hot showers. Although many of the department's campgrounds are full on summer weekends, most are only partially at capacity during the week and in the spring and fall.

Given Lake Michigan, Green Bay, and the abundance of streams and rivers in the region, fishing and boating have long been among the most popular outdoor activities here. Although there are many existing boat launches (both sites that accommodate trailers with motorboats as well as carry-in access for canoes and kayaks) there are several opportunities for additional access sites on underserved waterways on department properties to meet the demand.

The following table lists current and potential future opportunities for other forms of recreation.

Recreation Activity	Activity currently exists at the property; there are opportunities to expand this use	Activity currently exists at the property; there are only limited opportunities to expand this use	Activity currently does not exist at the property; there are opportunities to add this use	Activity currently does not exist at the property; there are only limited opportunities to add this use
Camping – developed	Menominee River State Park and Recreation Area Peshtigo River State Forest Point Beach State Forest Potawatomi State Park	Peninsula State Park	Heritage Hill State Park Whitefish Dunes State Park	Copper Culture State Park Dunbar Barrens
Camping – primitive	Menominee River State Park and Recreation Area Governor Thompson State Park Peshtigo River State Forest Newport State Park	State Ice Age Trail Areas Rock Island State Park	Heritage Hill State Park Whitefish Dunes State Park Wausaukee Timber Demonstration Forest	Point Beach State Forest Dunbar Barrens Potawatomi State Park Peninsula State Park Point Beach State Forest Copper Culture State Park
Canoeing or kayaking	Although not every property with open water has formal boat access sites (or access sites on all waterbodies) many of the lakes, rivers, and larger streams on department-managed lands have some opportunities to carry in a canoe or kayak. There are potentially many opportunities to add more walk-in trails to access waterbodies with canoes or kayaks.			
Fishing - lake fishing from a boat, canoe, or kayak	The department currently maintains improved boat launches throughout the region. The properties with potential to add more improved boat access sites (ramps for trailered boats) include: Reibolts Creek Public Access Green Bay West Shores Wildlife Area Collins Marsh Wildlife Area Point Beach State Forest Governor Thompson State Park Montana Lake Fishery Area			
Fishing - lake fishing from shore or a pier	All department lands with lakes are open to shore fishing and as such there are not opportunities to expand this opportunity. There are some fishing docks or piers on department lands and there are some opportunities to add new ones, particularly at those properties near cities and villages and with easy road access.			
Fishing - stream or river fishing from shore or wading	All department lands with streams or rivers are open to shore fishing and as such there are not opportunities to expand this opportunity at existing properties. There may be opportunities to expand shore fishing opportunities through the acquisition of key parcels.			

SUMMARY OF THE UPPER LAKE MICHIGAN COASTAL REGION ROA

With a diversity of public conservation lands, the Upper Lake Michigan Coastal Region has been an outdoor recreation destination for those looking for a mix of developed recreation facilities, Great Lakes scenery, and remote excursions. A wide range of recreation opportunities are currently provided in the region, from quiet wilderness areas to modern campgrounds with hot showers to developed mountain biking trails and miles and miles of snowmobile trails.

Although the region is rich in current opportunities, a few needs were expressed by residents. Topping the list of needs are: hiking, walking and running trails, horseback riding, and bicycle touring and mountain biking trails.

The department believes there are opportunities to meet many of the desired recreational experiences on some of the properties it manages in the Upper Lake Michigan Coastal Region. In general, the department believes the following property groups are well-suited to provide the identified needs in the region:

STATE PARKS AND FOREST

- Hiking/walking/running loop trails of varying lengths. Properties in proximity to cities and villages likely would be most popular.
- Surfaced bicycle trails that expand the existing network linking cities and villages and campgrounds.
- Developed camping, including adding electrified sites to some campgrounds or significant portions of campgrounds.
- Primitive camping, particularly at the large parks.
- Equestrian trails that either connect a network and/or are loop trails contained wholly in the property.
- Walk-in trails to expand access to waterbodies with canoes or kayaks.
- Developed boat access sites to provide access to Lake Michigan and Green Bay.

STATE WILDLIFE AND FISHERY AREAS

- Hiking/walking/running loop trails of varying lengths. Properties in proximity to cities and villages likely would be most popular.
- Surfaced bicycle trails that expand the existing network linking cities and villages and campgrounds.
- Mountain biking trails that expand existing opportunities and create new destinations. These would be single-track, constructed trails of varying difficulties, including potentially “technical” skills areas.
- Primitive camping that would serve the hunter, wilderness adventurer and water recreationist.
- Walk-in trails to expand access to waterbodies with canoes or kayak.

